

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
SOUTHERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Plaintiff,

Case: 2:25-cr-20010
Assigned To : DeClercq, Susan K.
Referral Judge: Patti, Anthony P.
Assign. Date : 1/7/2025
Description: IND SEALED MATTER (SS)

v.

TRAVIS ESKRIDGE, R.N.,
Defendant.

Violations: 18 U.S.C. § 1365(a)(4)
18 U.S.C. §§ 670(a)(1), 670(b)
21 U.S.C. § 843(a)(3)

INDICTMENT

THE GRAND JURY CHARGES:

GENERAL ALLEGATIONS

1. At all times relevant to this indictment, defendant TRAVIS ESKRIDGE was a registered nurse (R.N.) employed by Ascension St. John Hospital in Detroit, Michigan.
2. Defendant ESKRIDGE worked in the emergency room. As part of his regular duties, he would remove vials of liquid fentanyl, a Schedule II controlled substance, from a secure Pyxis machine. Pyxis is the brand name of an automated locked medication storage and dispensing system that requires a unique form of identification from a person accessing the machine. The system stores information about who accessed different

drawers or “pockets” of the machine, when they were accessed, what drugs were removed and what drugs were placed into the system. It also retains information about the patient requiring the drugs.

3. An audit of the defendant’s use of Pyxis machines between May 1, 2022 and August 9, 2022 revealed that on 178 occasions he accessed a Pyxis machine at St. John Hospital and removed a vial of fentanyl without a doctor’s authorization. A check of records dating back to December of 2021 found additional occasions where the defendant removed a vial of fentanyl without a doctor’s authorization. When questioned, the defendant admitted to removing vials of fentanyl from Pyxis machines on many occasions, without a doctor’s authorization. The defendant admitted to using the drugs. A drug test administered on August 10, 2022, revealed the presence of fentanyl in the defendant’s urine. The test detects fentanyl 24-72 hours after it is injected.
4. An examination of Pyxis machines on August 9, 2022 revealed three tampered vials of fentanyl in three different Pyxis machines. The vials were tampered in that the seal was perforated, the fentanyl had been mostly removed, and a liquid was added to make it appear that the vial still contained the labeled amount of fentanyl. Only the defendant conducted fentanyl transactions on all three machines during the relevant time period.

On August 10, 2022, two additional tampered vials of fentanyl were found in the defendant's employee locker. The defendant admitted stealing the vials, using the fentanyl, and then injecting saline into the vials found in his locker.

5. Ascension St. John Hospital was engaged in interstate commerce, in that patients, employees and products necessary to provide patient care travelled in interstate commerce. The fentanyl vials involved in this case were all manufactured in New Jersey, and travelled in interstate commerce to Ascension St. John Hospital in Detroit.

These general allegations are adopted and incorporated into each count of this indictment.

COUNT ONE

18 U.S.C. § 1365(a)(4)— Tampering with Consumer Products

On or about July 14, 2022, in the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division, at Detroit, defendant TRAVIS ESKRIDGE, R.N., with reckless disregard for the risk that another person would be placed in danger of bodily injury, and under circumstances manifesting extreme indifference to such risk, did knowingly and intentionally tamper with a consumer product that affected interstate commerce. The defendant worked as a registered nurse in the Emergency Room at Ascension St. John Hospital, located in Detroit, Michigan. TRAVIS ESKRIDGE tampered with a vial containing fentanyl, a narcotic painkiller in liquid form and a

Schedule II controlled substance, which he knew was intended to be administered to patients for relief of severe pain in the emergency room. The defendant knowingly and intentionally removed fentanyl from the vial and replaced it with another liquid. He then returned the adulterated vial to the machine from which controlled substances were dispensed, knowing they were to be administered to patients at the hospital. The defendant returned a vial to the return bin of Pyxis machine ECZC2 on July 14, 2022. The returned vial was subsequently placed in pocket E1 of Pyxis machine ECZC2. On August 9, 2022, “Vial 1” was removed from that pocket and found in a tampered condition. This was part of a pattern of unauthorized removals and returns of fentanyl by the defendant from December of 2021 until August of 2022.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1365(a)(4).

COUNT TWO

18 U.S.C. § 1365(a)(4)— Tampering with Consumer Products

On or about July 25, 2022, in the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division, at Detroit, defendant TRAVIS ESKRIDGE, R.N., with reckless disregard for the risk that another person would be placed in danger of bodily injury, and under circumstances manifesting extreme indifference to such risk, did knowingly and intentionally tamper with a consumer product that affected interstate commerce. The defendant worked as a registered nurse in the Emergency Room at Ascension St. John Hospital, located in Detroit, Michigan. TRAVIS ESKRIDGE

tampered with a vial containing fentanyl, a narcotic painkiller in liquid form and a Schedule II controlled substance, which he knew was intended to be administered to patients for relief of severe pain in the emergency room. The defendant knowingly and intentionally removed fentanyl from the vial and replaced it with another liquid. He then returned the adulterated vial to the machine from which controlled substances were dispensed, knowing they were to be administered to patients at the hospital. The defendant returned a vial to the return bin of Pyxis machine ECZA2 on July 25, 2022. The returned vial was subsequently placed in pocket A3 of Pyxis machine ECZA2. On August 9, 2022 “Vial 2” was removed from machine ECZA2 and found in a tampered condition. This was part of a pattern of unauthorized removals and returns of fentanyl by the defendant from December of 2021 until August of 2022.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1365(a)(4).

COUNT THREE

18 U.S.C. § 1365(a)(4)— Tampering with Consumer Products

On or about July 25, 2022, in the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division, at Detroit, defendant TRAVIS ESKRIDGE, R.N., with reckless disregard for the risk that another person would be placed in danger of bodily injury, and under circumstances manifesting extreme indifference to such risk, did knowingly and intentionally tamper with a consumer product that affected interstate commerce. The defendant worked as a registered nurse in the Emergency Room at

Ascension St. John Hospital, located in Detroit, Michigan. TRAVIS ESKRIDGE tampered with a vial containing fentanyl, a narcotic painkiller in liquid form and a Schedule II controlled substance, which he knew was intended to be administered to patients for relief of severe pain in the emergency room. The defendant knowingly and intentionally removed fentanyl from the vial and replaced it with another liquid. He then returned the adulterated vial to the machine from which controlled substances were dispensed, knowing they were to be administered to patients at the hospital. The defendant returned a vial to the return bin of Pyxis machine ECZB1 on July 25, 2022. On July 26, 2022, pharmacy staff moved the vial from the return bin to pocket E1 of Pyxis machine ECZB1. Pocket E1 was unopened until August 9, 2022, when “Vial 3” was removed from machine ECZB1 and found in a tampered condition. This was part of a pattern of unauthorized removals and returns of fentanyl by the defendant from December of 2021 until August of 2022.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1365(a)(4).

COUNT FOUR

18 U.S.C. §§ 670(a)(1), 670(b) — Theft of Medical Products by employee

On or about August 8, 2022, in the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division at Detroit, defendant TRAVIS ESKRIDGE, R.N., stole, obtained by fraud and deception, and then knowingly and unlawfully took, carried away and concealed in his employee locker pre-retail medical products, specifically, two

vials originally containing fentanyl solution. The vials originally contained fentanyl, a narcotic painkiller in liquid form and a Schedule II controlled substance, which were the property of Ascension St. John Hospital and were intended to be administered to patients for relief of severe pain in the emergency room. The defendant was an employee of Ascension St. John Hospital, which was an organization in the supply chain for the pre-retail medical products. This was part of a pattern of fentanyl thefts by the defendant from December of 2021 until August of 2022. The defendant acted in and by using any means or facility of interstate commerce; all in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 670(a)(1), 670(b).

COUNT FIVE

21 U.S.C. § 843(a)(3)—Obtaining a controlled substance by misrepresentation, fraud, deception or subterfuge

From on or about May 2022 until on or about August 2022, in the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division at Detroit, defendant TRAVIS ESKRIDGE, R.N., did knowingly and intentionally acquire and obtain possession of fentanyl, a Schedule II controlled substance, by misrepresentation, fraud, deception and subterfuge. The defendant was a nurse employed in the Emergency Room at Ascension St. John Hospital in Detroit, Michigan. The defendant accessed a machine storing vials of fentanyl by conducting transactions and entering codes indicating a drug was necessary to be administered to a particular patient, when in fact a doctor had not authorized the medication and the

defendant well knew the indicated patient would not receive the controlled substance. The defendant removed fentanyl from a Pyxis machine by using a patient's name but without a physician's order approximately 178 times between May 1, 2022 and August 9, 2022. Additional removals of fentanyl without a physician's order were found dating back to December of 2021. The defendant took possession of the controlled substances for his personal use instead of administering them to patients; all in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 843(a)(3).

THIS IS A TRUE BILL

s/GRAND JURY FOREPERSON


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United States Attorney

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s/WAYNE F. PRATT
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ORIGINALUnited States District Court
Eastern District of Michigan**Criminal Case Cover**Case: 2:25-cr-20010
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NOTE: It is the responsibility of the Assistant U.S. Attorney signing this form to complete

	Companion Case Number:
This may be a companion case based upon LCrR 57.10 (b)(4) ¹ :	Judge Assigned:
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	AUSA's Initials: <i>WP</i>

Case Title: USA v. TRAVIS ESKRIDGECounty where offense occurred : WayneCheck One: ☒ Felony ☐ Misdemeanor ☐ Petty

☒ Indictment/___ Information --- no prior complaint.
☐ Indictment/___ Information --- based upon prior complaint [Case number: _____]
☐ Indictment/___ Information --- based upon LCrR 57.10 (d) [Complete Superseding section below].


Superseding to Case No: _____ Judge: _____

- ☐ Corrects errors; no additional charges or defendants.
☐ Involves, for plea purposes, different charges or adds counts.
☐ Embraces same subject matter but adds the additional defendants or charges below:

<u>Defendant name</u>	<u>Charges</u>	<u>Prior Complaint (if applicable)</u>
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Please take notice that the below listed Assistant United States Attorney is the attorney of record for the above captioned case.

January 7, 2025
Date


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¹ Companion cases are matters in which it appears that (1) substantially similar evidence will be offered at trial, or (2) the same or related parties are present, and the cases arise out of the same transaction or occurrence. Cases may be companion cases even though one of them may have already been terminated.